

LESSON 31
“And So Were The Churches Established In The Faith”
Acts 15:36-18:22, 1 and 2 Thessalonians

OVERVIEW:

Paul and Barnabas prepare for their second missions. Paul takes Silas and Timothy. Paul visits Athens. Paul sends an epistle to the Thessalonians.

SCRIPTURES:

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES
CHAPTER 15

Paul's second missionary journey was probably from 51-53 AD.

36 ¶ And some days after Paul said unto Barnabas, Let us go again and ^avisit our ^bbrethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, *and see* how they do.

37 And Barnabas determined to take with them ^aJohn, whose surname was ^bMark.

38 But Paul thought not good to take him with them, who departed from them from Pamphylia, and went not with them to the work.

39 And the ^acontention was so sharp between them, that they departed asunder one from the other: and so Barnabas took Mark, and sailed unto Cyprus; (Mark had abandoned them in Perga (Acts 13:13) Paul and Barnabas had a difference of opinion. Paul may have determined not to keep company with one less zealous than he was. (Barnabas, Paul's associate, wanted to take Mark along. But Paul "thought it not good" to take him, because Mark had abandoned them on a previous mission (Acts 15:37-39). Mark was apparently young and fearful of the challenge of missionary work (Acts 13:13), but he eventually matured in the faith (Col. 4:10, 2 Tim. 4:11; Philemon 24) and wrote the Gospel that bears his name. According to tradition, he was martyred at Alexandria. Breck Englund, Lesson 31)

40 And Paul chose Silas, (Silas may be the same as Silvanus in Paul's letters. If so, he was the scribe who wrote 1 Peter and carried it to Asia Minor. He may have been a Roman citizen.) and departed, being recommended by the brethren unto the grace of God.

41 And he went through Syria and Cilicia, ^aconfirming the churches.

CHAPTER 16

Paul directed in a vision to preach in Macedonia—He casts an evil spirit out of a woman—He and Silas are imprisoned, and convert the jailor—They admonish all to believe on the Lord Jesus and be saved.

1 THEN came he to Derbe and Lystra: and, behold, a certain disciple was there, named ^aTimotheus, (Timothy) the son of a certain woman, which was a ^bJewess, and believed; but his father was a Greek:

2 Which was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium.

3 Him would Paul have to go forth with him; and took and ^acircumcised him because of the Jews which were in those quarters: for they knew all that his father was a Greek. (Although Paul was opposed to circumcision as essential for salvation and he emphatically declared that it was not needful for Titus to be circumcised (Gal 2:1-3), soon after the Jerusalem council Paul circumcised the young Timothy before taking him as a companion on the second mission. This action provides an insight into Paul's thinking. He saw a difference between necessity and convenience. With Titus, the question was whether or not circumcision was essential for salvation; thus Paul opposed it. With Timothy it was a matter of rendering him acceptable to the

non-Christian Jews where he would do missionary work. Paul was willing to allow circumcision as a concession, but not as a requirement, so that the Jews would be willing to listen to Timothy teach the gospel. This distinction reveals something of Paul's mind and method. Robert Matthews, *Studies in the Scriptures* 6:41. In circumcising Timothy, Paul apparently was humoring the Jews. As far as the gospel law was concerned, the act was wrong and should not have been performed. Circumcision was a thing of the past. But seemingly the social pressures were such that if the ordinances had not been performed in this case, it would have alienated the Jewish community and stopped them from investigating the gospel. Hence Paul performed an unnecessary and in fact improper act to attract the Jews toward that religion which would teach them in due course that the law of circumcision was fulfilled in Christ. DNTC, 2:147.)

4 And as they went through the cities, they delivered them the ^adecrees for to keep, that were ordained of the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem.

5 And so were the churches ^aestablished in the faith, and increased in number daily.

6 Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia, and were forbidden of the ^aHoly Ghost to preach the word in Asia, (It is simply a matter of sending missionaries where there are more receptive people. DNTC, 3:147)

7 After they were come to Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia: but the Spirit suffered them not. (Does the Spirit sometimes tell you not to do certain things or go to certain places, like certain movies, or watching TV shows, etc.?)

8 And they passing by Mysia came down to Troas.

9 And a ^avision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us.

10 And after he had seen the vision, immediately **we** endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called **us** for to preach the gospel unto them. (We – Luke now joins Paul in his missionary work.)

11 Therefore loosing from Troas, **we** came with a straight course to Samothracia, and the next day to Neapolis; (They went right away as the Lord commanded.)

12 And from thence to Philippi, which is the chief city of that part of Macedonia, *and* a colony: and we were in that city abiding certain days. (The Gospel first preached in Europe. "Philippi was named for its refounder Philip, the father of Alexander the Great, the world conqueror. But a different world conqueror came when Paul arrived with his small missionary group in obedience to the vision of the pleading man of Macedonia (Acts 16:9). ... 'Colony' was a technical term for Romans settled outside Rome. That Philippi was a colony implies that it had civic rights of Rome and the honor of modeling its local government after that of the mother city. The old Roman virtues were loyalty and reliability. These qualities certainly summarize the remarkable faithfulness of the Philippian Christians." (Richard Lloyd Anderson, *Understanding Paul* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1983], 291))

13 **And on the Sabbath we went out of the city by a river side**, where (the people resorted for) prayer ~~was wont~~ to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted *thither*. (This was a Gentile city without a synagogue so they met down by the river.)

14 ¶ **And a certain woman named ^aLydia, a seller of purple** (dye from a mollusk, crushed up and very expensive. Lydia appears to be a very successful business woman.), of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard *us*: whose ^bheart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul.

15 And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought *us*, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and ^aabide *there*. **And she constrained us**. (David O. McKay said: "If Lydia was the first one baptized, then she has the distinction of being the first person in Europe to accept Christianity. Whether 'her household' means she had children, or whether it refers to her servants or to both we do not know, but they became the nucleus of a thriving branch of the Church in

that city, and in Lydia's home town as well.” (*Ancient Apostles* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1964], 186))

16 ¶ And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by ^asoothsaying: (A soothsayer is one of Satan’s substitutes for a seer or a prophet. His mission is to foretell the future by the power of the evil one. Such false prophets were common anciently in the Eastern nations, but they were not permitted in Israel, and the penalty for practicing soothsaying was death. When the final latter-day triumph of Israel is achieved the Lord has promised to cut off witchcrafts and soothsayers out of the land. MD, p. 746)

17 The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, ^aThese men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation.

18 And this did she many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the ^aspirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour. (In effect she was saying: Go ahead and believe in Paul and Silas and this Jesus whom they preach. I agree they and their Master are of God; and since we are now united on that point, you can also continue to follow me and enjoy the fruits of my divination. DNTC, 2:149)

19 ¶ And when her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone, they caught Paul and Silas, and drew *them* into the marketplace unto the rulers,

20 And brought them to the magistrates, saying, These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city,

21 And teach customs, which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans.

22 And the multitude rose up together against them: and the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to ^abeat *them*.

23 And when they had laid many ^astripes upon them, they cast *them* into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely:

24 Who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks.

25 ¶ And at ^amidnight Paul and Silas prayed, and ^bsang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them. (Would we be singing and praising God while being cast in prison? How do we deal with adversity. As the Lord told the Prophet Joseph Smith while in jail, “My son, peace be unto thy soul; thine adversity and thine afflictions shall be but a small moment; And then, if thou endure it well, God shall exalt thee on high; thou shalt triumph over all thy foes. D&C 121:7-8. David O. McKay “The inner prison of a Roman jail was a dark, damp, gloomy dungeon. One writer calls it a ‘pestilential cell, damp and cold, from which the light was excluded, and where the chains rusted on the limbs of the prisoners.’ But not content with shutting the elders up in such a gloomy hole, ‘the jailor made their feet fast in the stocks.’ In fastening only their feet, however, he showed a little mercy for there were holes in the stock for the wrists and for the neck also. “With their backs sore and bleeding, their bodies chilled by the cold and dampness, their legs cramped and aching, hungry and sleepless and surrounded by the blackness of midnight, Paul and Silas who knew they were suffering for the sake of the true Gospel, could rejoice and praise the Lord. This they did at midnight, by praying and singing ‘praises unto God.’ Their voices rang out through the prison cells; and prisoners, hard hearted and sinful, listened in surprise to the first Christian hymn they had ever heard. The power of the Lord manifested itself not only in the hearts of His true servants, but in the entire prison and the town as well; for ‘suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken.’ All the bolts and bars at the doors fell from their sockets and the doors of the prison flew open, and ‘every one's bands were loosed,’ but not a prisoner tried to escape.” (*Ancient Apostles* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1964], 187-8.)

26 And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the ^adoors were opened, and every one’s bands were loosed.

27 And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled.

28 But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here.

29 Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas,

30 And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?

31 And they said, ^aBelieve on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. (Hopefully, latter-day saints will never feel the need to “steer away” from the writings of Paul. His answer was absolutely correct. Paul never said that believing in Christ was *all* the man had to do. Indeed, Paul’s teachings that same evening (v. 32) must have dealt with the natural consequence of real faith—repentance and baptism—as is evidenced in the jailor’s actions (v. 33). Peter was asked the same question but gave a different response. He replied, ‘Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.’ (Acts 2:38) Yet, Peter’s response obviously implied the need for faith in Jesus Christ. Thus, Paul spoke of faith implying the need for repentance and baptism, and Peter spoke of repentance and baptism while implying the need for faith. Both their answers are correct as long as they are not taken out of context. Nevertheless, there are always those unlearned and unstable who would wrest the scriptures to their own destruction (2 Pet 3:16).)

32 And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house.

33 And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed *their* stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway.

34 And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.

35 And when it was day, the magistrates sent the serjeants, saying, Let those men go.

36 And the keeper of the prison told this saying to Paul, The magistrates have sent to let you go: now therefore depart, and go in peace.

37 But Paul said unto them, They have beaten us openly uncondemned, being ^aRomans, and have cast us into prison; and now do they thrust us out ^bprivily? (secretly) nay verily; but let them come themselves and fetch us out. (David O. McKay: “Tarsus, an exceedingly rich and populous city, was a Roman municipium, or free corporation. This means that the freedom of Rome (which ruled all those countries at that time) had been given to the freemen of Tarsus. This freedom had been granted because the men of Tarsus had defended two emperors of Rome during a rebellion against them. Thus, Saul, though a Jew, was a freeborn Roman citizen.” (*Ancient Apostles* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1964], 144) Bruce R. McConkie: “Two Romans, citizens of the mightiest empire on earth—entitled thereby to an impartial trial; to an appeal to the emperor; to freedom from degrading punishments, including bonds, scourging, and crucifixion—are here condemned without a trial, scourged without mercy, imprisoned in bonds in a damp and pestilential cell, all for the testimony of Jesus and the hope of a better resurrection.” (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 2:151.))

38 And the serjeants told these words unto the magistrates: and they feared, when they heard that they were Romans. (Paul did this so that the corrupt leaders of the city would leave the disciples alone and let them worship as they would. This becomes a vibrant branch of the Church in Philippi because the city officials would let the members alone. Also, the jailer becomes converted.)

39 And they came and besought them, and brought *them* out, and desired *them* to depart out of the city.

40 And they went out of the prison, and entered into *the house of* ^aLydia: and when they had seen the brethren, they comforted them, and departed.

CHAPTER 17

Paul and Silas preach and are persecuted in Thessalonica and in Berea—Paul, in Athens, preaches on Mars’ hill about the Unknown God—He says: ‘We are the offspring of God.’

1 NOW when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to ^aThessalonica, (Named for the sister of Alexander the Great who was born near there.) where was a synagogue of the Jews: (A synagogue would be the best place to find Gentile proselytes who were ready for the gospel. They would have Gentile relatives and friends; the referral system for Gentiles would begin at the Jewish synagogue. Robert Matthews, Studies in the Scriptures, 6:42)

2 And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days ^areasoned with them out of the ^bscriptures,

3 Opening and alleging, (To us, allege means to assert, to state, to set forth a proposition or thesis, all without proof. But to those of the early seventeenth century, it meant to bring forth proof, to present evidence, to back assertions with facts. Surely Paul would not spend three Sabbaths of precious time merely stating his case for Christ without presenting much supporting evidence. BYU New Testament Study Guide, p. 265) that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ.

4 And some of them believed, and consorted with Paul and Silas; and of the devout ^aGreeks a great multitude, and of the chief ^bwomen not a few.

5 ¶ But the ^aJews which believed not, moved with envy, took unto them certain ^blewd (wicked, evil) fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city on an ^cuproar, and ^dassaulted the house of Jason (a relative of Paul), and sought to bring them out to the people.

6 And when they found them not, they drew Jason and certain brethren unto the rulers of the city, crying, These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also;

7 Whom Jason hath received: and these all do contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, *one* Jesus.

8 And they troubled the people and the rulers of the city, when they heard these things.

9 And when they had taken security of Jason, and of the other, they let them go.

10 ¶ And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea: who coming *thither* went into the synagogue of the Jews.

11 These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and ^asearched the scriptures daily, (This is the only place in the standard works where it says searching the scriptures daily.) whether those things were so. (These Jews were ready to learn the gospel and accepted it. (Like the Berean saints, we must be ready and willing to accept the instructions of true prophets. "Behold, the Lord requireth the heart and a willing mind," says latter-day scripture (D&C 64:34) "and the willing and obedient shall eat the good of the land of Zion." What were the Bereans ready and willing to do? To receive the word of the Lord and to act upon it. Also, the Berean saints followed the sound practice of testing the teachings of Paul against the scriptures. They "searched the scriptures daily" in order to verify the words of Paul. The Greek term translated here as "search" actually means "to scrutinize closely, to examine"; apparently, a key difference between the Thessalonian and the Berean Jews was this habit of closely examining the scriptures in search of truth. Latter-day Saints must also make a habit of scrutinizing the scriptures on a daily basis if we wish to be attuned to the voice of truth as the Bereans were. Breck Englund, Lesson 31)

12 Therefore many of them believed; also of honourable women which were Greeks, and of men, not a few.

13 But when the Jews of Thessalonica had knowledge that the word of God was preached of Paul at Berea, they came thither also, and stirred up the people.

14 And then immediately the brethren sent away Paul to go as it were to the sea: but Silas and ^aTimotheus abode there still.

15 And they that conducted Paul brought him unto ^aAthens: and receiving a commandment unto Silas and Timotheus for to come to him with all speed, they departed.

16 ¶ Now while Paul waited for them at Athens, his spirit was stirred in him, when he saw the

city^a wholly given to^b idolatry. (full of idols, i.e., grossly idolatrous)

17 Therefore^a disputed he (Dallin H. Oaks: "The Acts of the Apostles record that Paul 'disputed' in the synagogue. (See Acts 17:17; 19:8.) In light of his own teachings on contention, those accounts surely describe reasoned discussions, not angry confrontations. In Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, he gave them the same advice: 'If any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God.' (1 Cor. 11:16.) In his second letter, he expressed the fear that when he came to them he would find 'debates, envyings, wraths, strifes, backbitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults.' (2 Cor. 12:20.) Similarly, Paul advised Titus to 'avoid foolish questions, . . . and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain.' (Titus 3:9.) He instructed Timothy, 'Foolish and unlearned questions avoid,' because 'they do gender strifes.' He continues: 'And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves.' (2 Tim. 2:24-25.)" (*The Lord's Way* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1991], 146.)) in the^b synagogue with the Jews, and with the devout persons, and in the market daily with them that met with him. (While Paul is waiting for other missionaries to meet him in Athens, he wanders around the markets, visiting with people about the gospel.)

18 Then certain philosophers of the Epicureans, (Epicureanism was named for Epicurus, who lived just before and after 300 BC. According to his philosophy, the world came into existence by chance and was without either purpose or design. The highest good to which man could attain was that which brought him the greatest pleasure or the greatest absence of sorrow and pain. Contrary to popular notions then and now, Epicureanism did not advocate wholesale licentiousness as an objective in life, but rather those enjoyments which gave to man the longest and fullest personal satisfaction. New Testament Study Guide, p. 265) and of the Stoicks, (Stoicism recognized a supreme governing power in the universe. According to this philosophy, all things have been ordered and set in motion by a Divine Mind, and the wise man, the true Stoic, is he who accepts conditions as he finds them rather than changes them to be as he wishes them to be. Such acceptance requires great courage and self-control, for man is locked into a never-ending battle with nature. The body is not a vessel to be punished or catered to; it is to be ignored. New Testament Study Guide, p. 265) encountered him. And some said, What will this babbling say? other some, He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods: because he preached unto them Jesus, and the resurrection.

19 And they took him, and brought him unto^a Areopagus, (Hill of Ares (Mars); probably meaning the civil council which met there) saying, May we know what this new doctrine, whereof thou speakest, is?

20 For thou bringest certain strange things to our ears: we would know therefore what these things mean.

21 (For all the Athenians and strangers which were there^a spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing.) (In this center of ancient learning, the great philosophers Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle had taught. The Athenian philosophical schools were world renowned, and here men had reached the highest achievements of human reason. But by the time of Paul, much of this tradition had disintegrated. Hugh Nibley describes the situation in Athens this way: "An army of brilliant and high-powered talkers, having caught the public fancy as traveling virtuosi, opened schools which in short order got a monopoly of public and private education." These popular talkers propagated "a mock philosophy whose aim is not knowledge but the appearance of knowledge." Even Socrates had been wise enough to point out that "honest study has no more chance of competing with this sort of thing than a conscientious doctor would have of keeping his child patient in competition with a pastry cook who prescribed nothing but dessert." Nibley, H. *The World and the Prophets*. Deseret Book, 1987, pp. 109-110.)

22 ¶ Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars' hill, and said, *Ye* men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are ^atoo superstitious. (most religious; i.e., careful in divine things.)

23 For as I passed by, and beheld your ^adevotions, (sacred, venerated objects) I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE ^bUNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ^cignorantly worship, him ^ddeclare I unto you.

24 God that ^amade the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, ^bdwelleth not in temples made with hands;

25 Neither is ^aworshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and ^bbreath, and all things;

26 And hath ^amade of ^bone ^cblood ^dall ^enations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath ^fdetermined the ^gtimes before ^happointed, and the ⁱbounds of their habitation; (Here is an important doctrinal point that squares precisely with that taught by Moses, who speaks of how God divided "to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam," and "set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. Deut 32:8. The doctrinal implication of these scriptures is plain: "If the Lord appointed unto the nations the bounds of their habitation, then there must have been a selection of spirits to form these nations." Joseph F. Smith, *The Way to Perfection*, p. 47. President Harold B. Lee said: "...May I ask each of you again the question, 'Who are you?' You are all the sons and daughters of God. Your spirits were created and lived as organized intelligences before the world was. You have been blessed to have a physical body because of your obedience to certain commandments in that premortal state. You are now born into a family to which you have come, into the nations through which you have come, as reward for the kind of lives you lived before you came here and at a time in the world's history, as the Apostle Paul taught the men of Athens and as the Lord revealed to Moses, determined by the faithfulness of such of those who lived before this world was created." CR Oct, 1973, p. 7. God sends his spirit children to earth on a regular, organized schedule. There is nothing haphazard or accidental about the peopling of the earth or the assignment of various land areas to the races of men. The race and nation in which men are born in this world is a direct result of their pre-existent life. All the spirit hosts of heaven deemed worthy to receive mortal bodies were foreordained to pass through this earthly probation in the particular race and nation suited to their needs, circumstances, and talents. When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, Moses said with reference to pre-existence, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. Not only Israel, but all groups were thus foreknown and their total memberships designated in the pre-mortal life. MD, p. 616. Neal Maxwell said: "**When we say God has a plan, he truly has a plan—not simply a grand scale, but for each of us as individuals, allocating some special talent to this dispensation and some to another.** I regard God as the perfect personnel manager, even though he must work with and through all of us who are so imperfect. "I assume, gladly, that in the allocation to America of remarkable leaders like Thomas Jefferson, George Washington, and Abraham Lincoln, the Lord was just as careful. After all, if you've got only one Abraham Lincoln, you'd better put him in that point in history when he's most needed—much as some of us might like to have him now." (*Deposition of a Disciple* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1976], 45-46.))

27 That they should ^aseek the Lord, ^bif haply they might ^cfeel after him, and (they are willing to) find him, though he be (he is) not far from every one of us:

28 For in him we ^alive, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his ^boffspring. (Paul quotes Greek poets.)

29 Forasmuch then as we are the ^aoffspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto ^bgold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's ^cdevice.

30 And the times of this ^aignorance God ^bwinked (overlooked, disregarded) at; but now

^ccommandeth all men every where to ^drepent:

31 Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will ^ajudge the world in righteousness by ~~that man~~ (him) whom he hath ^bordained; ~~whereof~~ (and) he hath given assurance (of this) unto all men, in that he hath ^craised him from the dead. (Paul bears testimony of Jesus.)

32 ¶ And when they heard of the ^aresurrection of the dead, some ^bmocked: and others said, We will hear thee again of this matter. (In contrast to the popular theorizers of the day, Paul announced revelation from heaven to the men of Athens: "I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you." The key principles Paul taught the Athenians in Acts 17 can be summed up this way: This great unknown God is Lord and creator of heaven and earth (v. 24-25) God has created "of one blood all nations of men" (v. 26) If we are willing to find him, he is not far from every one of us (v. 27, JST) We are his offspring (v. 28) As his offspring, we should not think that the Godhead can be represented by idols (v. 29) During the times of ignorance, God "winked at" the ill doings of men, but now commands all men everywhere to repent (v. 30). The term "winked at" is more properly translated "overlooked"; God is merciful to those who through no fault of their own do not know his laws. He will judge the world in righteousness by "that man he hath ordained," Jesus Christ, whom "he hath raised from the dead" (v. 31) When the crowd heard Paul teach the resurrection, some mocked him, probably loudly enough to end the speech. Others who wanted to hear more "clave unto him, and believed." Apparently, most of the Athenians were willing enough to listen to Paul's ideas--up to that point he was just another preacher--until he started to make claims about a real resurrection from the dead; they could not go along with that. "Whatever merit philosophy might have in the search for God has been superseded by a revelation from heaven," (2) and the crowd was not willing to give up the philosophical game for the revelatory reality. Breck England, Lesson 31)

33 So Paul departed from among them.

34 Howbeit certain men clave unto him, and believed: among the which was Dionysius the ^aAreopagite, (Who later became the first Bishop of Athens.) and a woman named Damaris, and others with them.

CHAPTER 18

Being rejected by the Jews, Paul turns to the Gentiles—He preaches, ministers, and travels—Apollos also preaches with power.

1 AFTER these things Paul departed from Athens, and came to Corinth;

2 And found a certain Jew named ^aAquila, born in Pontus, lately come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla; (missionary couple) (because that Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome:) and came unto them.

3 And because he was of the same craft, he abode with them, and ^awrought: for by their occupation they were ^btentmakers. (Both Paul and Aquila were tentmakers.)

4 And he reasoned in the ^asynagogue every ^bsabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks. (They didn't stop teaching the Jews, while teaching to the Gentiles.)

5 And when Silas and ^aTimotheus were come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in the spirit, and ^btestified to the Jews that Jesus was ^cChrist.

The 1st Book of Thessalonians was written at approximately this time. The letters to the Thessalonians were, as nearly as can be determined, written from Corinth several months after Paul had left Macedonia, probably near the close of AD 52. New Testament Study Guide, p. 274.)

6 And when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, he ^ashook *his* raiment, (Paul is here following the Israelitish custom of dramatizing his personal freedom from responsibility where the sins of his hearers are concerned. The Nephite prophet Jacob did the same thing as part of his preaching (2 Ne 9:44) DNTC, 2:163) and said unto them, Your ^bblood *be* upon your own heads; I *am* clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles.

7 ¶ And he departed thence, and entered into a certain *man's* house, named Justus, *one* that worshipped God, whose house joined hard to the synagogue.

8 And ^aCrispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing ^bbelieved, and were baptized. (Corinth was a very wicked city, but the Lord had a people ready to hear the gospel.)

9 Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a ^avision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: 10 For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much ^apeople in this city.

11 And he continued *there* a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them. (With Paul spending at least a year and a half in Corinth, he most likely wrote his epistle to the Thessalonians in late AD 50 or AD 51)

12 ¶ And when Gallio was the deputy of Achaia, the Jews made insurrection with one accord against Paul, and brought him to the judgment seat,

13 Saying, This *fellow* persuadeth men to ^aworship God contrary to the law.

14 And when Paul was now about to open *his* mouth, Gallio said unto the Jews, If it were a matter of wrong or ^awicked ^blewdness, (*crime*) O ye Jews, reason would that I should bear with you:

15 But if it be a ^aquestion of words and names, and *of* your law, look ye *to it*; for I will be no judge of such *matters*.

16 And he drave them from the judgment seat.

17 Then all the Greeks took Sosthenes, the chief ruler of the synagogue, and beat *him* before the judgment seat. And Gallio cared for none of those things.

(The 2nd Book of Thessalonians was written at approximately this time.)

18 ¶ And Paul *after this* tarried *there* yet a good while, and then took his leave of the brethren, and sailed thence into Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila (*missionary couple*); *having shorn his head in Cenchrea*: for he had a ^avow. (As an incentive to greater personal righteousness, it is a wholesome and proper thing for the saints to make frequent vows to the Lord. These are solemn promises to perform some duty, refrain from some sin, keep some commandment, or press forward in greater service in the kingdom. The saints should offer their vows both on the Lord's day and on all days (D&C 59:8-12); and once offered, they are to be kept. (D&C 108:3, Num 30:2. Eccles 5:4-5) When vows are made in righteousness, they are sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise, and the Lord's blessings attend their performance. (D&C 132:7) What Paul's vow was is not clear. From the fact that he shaved his head it is assumed he may have been following the Jewish custom where Nazarites are concerned. If so he was performing an unnecessary and improper rite, for the apparent purpose of humoring either the Jewish segment of the Church or prospective Jewish converts or both. MD, p. 825, DNTC, 2:165)

19 And he came to Ephesus, and left them there: but he himself entered into the synagogue, and ^areasoned with the Jews.

20 When they desired *him* to tarry longer time with them, he consented not;

21 But bade them farewell, saying, I must by all means keep this feast that cometh in Jerusalem: but I will return again unto you, if God will. And he sailed from Ephesus.

22 And when he had landed at Caesarea, and gone up, and saluted the church, he went down to Antioch.

(Purpose of the letter:

During his second missionary journey, Paul labored at Thessalonica among the Jewish people, but some of them rejected the message. (See Acts 17:1-9.) The gospel was well established, however, among the gentiles of this city. (1 Thes. 1:9, 1 Thes. 2:14, 1 Thes. 4:1-5.) These gentile converts experienced much persecution from their own countrymen as well as from the Jews, as Paul did during his initial stay. Silvanus and Timothy had been sent by Paul as official church representatives to “know your faith” (1 Thes. 3:2, 5) and to learn of the saints’ progress in living the gospel. The report that they gave to Paul brought to light problems, both doctrinal and practical, among the members. It appears that a misunderstanding had developed concerning deceased members and their relationship to events after the second coming of Christ. Paul attempted to clarify the issue by briefly reviewing some of the principles of the second coming in the first epistle. The question persisted and consequently drew further commentary in his second letter. In addition, he counseled the saints concerning the persecution they had experienced (1 Thes. 2:14) and also concerning their daily living of the gospel (1 Thes. 5:14-22). He also gave direction pertaining to their difficulty with slothful and disobedient members. (2 Thes. 3:6-15.) Edward Brandt, Ensign, Apr 1976, p. 56)

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE
THESSALONIANS
CHAPTER 1

The gospel comes both in word and in power. (These are most likely Paul’s first epistles. Those scriptures marked in red in these next two chapters are attributes that missionaries should have, and we should have, as we teach the gospel to our neighbors.)

(Salutation)

1 PAUL, and ^aSilvanus, (Silas) and ^bTimotheus, (Timothy) (servants of God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ,) ^cunto the ^dchurch of the ^eThessalonians ~~which is in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ:~~ Grace ~~be~~ unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

(Thanksgiving)

2 We give ^athanks to God always for you all, making mention of you (all,) in our prayers (to God for you);

3 Remembering without ceasing your work of ^afaith, and ^blabour of love, and ^cpatience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father;

4 Knowing, brethren ^abeloved, your ^belection of God. (beloved of God, your election)

5 For our ^agospel ^bcame not unto you in ^cword only, but also in ^dpower, and in the ^eHoly Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what ^fmanner of men we were among you for your sake. (Anyone can have the word, but the power comes from God. This power is the priesthood and the Holy Ghost.)

6 And ye became ^afollowers (imitators) of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much ^baffliction, with ^cjoy of the Holy Ghost: (No one ever receives the gospel until he gains a revelation from the Holy Ghost; the gospel is a spiritual matter and comes only by the power of the Spirit. DNTC, 3:43)

7 So that ye were ^aensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia.

8 For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every ^aplace your faith to (ward) God-ward is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak any thing.

9 For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from ^aidols to serve the ^bliving and true God;

10 And to wait for his Son from ^aheaven, whom he raised from the dead, *even* Jesus, which ^bdelivered us from the ^cwrath to come.

CHAPTER 2

True ministers preach in a godly manner—Converts are the glory and joy of missionaries.

(Missionaries' visit)

1 FOR yourselves, brethren, know our ^aentrance in unto you, that it was not in vain:
2 But even after that we had suffered before, and were shamefully ^aentreated, as ye know, at Philippi, we were bold in our God to ^bspeak unto you the gospel of God with much contention.
3 For our exhortation *was* not of ^adeceit, nor of uncleanness, nor in ^bguile:
4 But as we were ^aallowed (approved, found worthy, chosen) of God to be ^bput in ^ctrust with the gospel, even so we ^dspeak; not as ^cpleasing men, but God, which ^ftrieth our hearts.
5 For neither at any time used we ^aflattering words, as ye know, nor a cloke of ^bcovetousness; God *is* witness:
6 Nor of men sought we ^aglory, neither of you, nor *yet* of others, when we might have been burdensome, as the apostles of Christ.
7 But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children:
8 So being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own ^asouls, because ye were dear unto us.
9 For ye remember, brethren, our labour and ^atravail: (toil) for ^blabouring night and day, because we would not be ^cchargeable (burdensome) unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God.
10 Ye *are* ^awitnesses, and God *also*, how holily and justly and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you that believe:
11 As ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you, as a father *doth* his ^achildren,
12 That ye would ^awalk ^bworthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory. (You were foreordained to join the Church and to receive eternal life. DNTC, 3:45)

(Reception of the Gospel)

13 For this cause also ^athank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received *it* not *as* the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.
14 For ye, brethren, became ^afollowers (imitators) of the churches of God which in Judaea are in Christ Jesus: for ye also have ^bsuffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they *have* of the Jews:
15 Who both ^akilled the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they please not God, and are contrary to all men:
16 ^aForbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, to fill up their sins ^balway: for the wrath is come (ing) upon them to the uttermost. (Why should the Jews seek to prevent the spread of the gospel, not alone among themselves and their kindred, but among the Gentiles, also? Is not this very manifestation of hatred and venom an evidence of the divinity of the work? How could so much hatred and bitterness against the truth be kept alive unless Satan was stirring them up, using persecution as a tool to fight the truth? DNTC, 3:46)

(Concern for welfare of the Saints)

17 But we, brethren, being taken from you for a short time in presence, not in heart, endeavoured the more abundantly to see your ^aface with great desire.

18 Wherefore we would have come unto you, even I Paul, once and again; but Satan hindered us.
19 For what *is* our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? *Are* not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his ^acoming?
20 For ye are our glory and joy.

CHAPTER 3

Saints exhorted to perfect that which is lacking in their faith.

1 WHEREFORE when we could no longer forbear, we thought it good to be left at ^aAthens alone;
2 And sent ^aTimotheus, our brother, and minister of God, and our fellowlabourer in the gospel of Christ, to ^bestablish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith:
3 That no man should be ^amoved (**disturbed, perturbed**) by these ^bafflictions: for yourselves know that we are ^cappointed thereunto.
4 For verily, when we were with you, we told you before that we should suffer tribulation; even as it came to pass, and ye know.
5 For this cause, when I could no longer forbear, I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the ^atempter have ^btempted (**put to trial, test**) you, and our labour be in vain.
6 But now when Timotheus came from you unto us, and brought us good tidings of your faith and charity, and that ye have good remembrance of us always, desiring greatly to see us, as we also *to see* you:
7 Therefore, brethren, we were ^acomforted over you in all our ^baffliction and distress by your faith:
8 For now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord.

(Thanksgiving and blessing)

9 For what thanks can we render to God again for you, for all the ^ajoy wherewith we joy for your sakes before our God;
10 Night and day praying exceedingly that we might see your ^aface, and might ^bperfect that which is lacking in your faith?
11 Now God himself and our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way unto you.
12 And the Lord make you to increase and ^aabound in ^blove one toward another, and toward all *men*, even as we *do* toward you:
13 **To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the ^acoming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his ^bsaints.** (President Brigham Young said: “Do not be too anxious for the Lord to hasten this work. Let our anxiety be centered upon this one thing, the sanctification of our own hearts, the purifying of our own affections, the preparing of ourselves for the approach of the events that are hastening upon us. This should be our concern, this should be our study, this should be our daily prayer...Seek to have the Spirit of Christ, that we may wait patiently the time of the Lord and prepare ourselves for the times that are coming. This is our duty.” JD, 9:3)

CHAPTER 4

Saints exhorted to be holy, sanctify themselves, and love one another—The Lord shall come and the dead shall rise.

(Sexual purity)

1 FURTHERMORE then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort *you* by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have^a received of us how ye ought to^b walk and to^c please God, *so* ye would^d abound more and more.

2 For ye know what commandments^a we gave you by the Lord Jesus.

3 For this is the will of God, *even your^a sanctification*, (To be sanctified is to become clean, pure, and spotless; to be free from the blood and sins of the world; to become a new creature of the Holy Ghost, one whose body has been renewed by the rebirth of the Spirit. Sanctification is a state of saintliness, a state attained only by conformity to the laws and ordinances of the gospel. The plan of salvation is the system and means provided whereby men may sanctify their souls and thereby become worthy of a celestial inheritance. DNTC, 3:49) that ye should^b abstain from^c fornication: (immorality)

4 That every one of you should know how to possess his^a vessel (body) in^b sanctification and honour;

5 Not in the^a lust (passion of lust) of concupiscence (to desire ardently), even as the^b Gentiles which^c know not God:

6 That no *man*^a go beyond (take advantage of, wrong) and defraud his brother in^b any matter (the matter): because that the Lord *is* the^c avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified.

7 For God hath not called us unto^a uncleanness, but unto holiness. (Remember, brethren, that he has called you unto holiness and, need we say, to be like him in purity. How wise, how holy, how chaste, and how perfect, then, you ought to conduct yourselves in his sight. Joseph Smith's Commentary on the Bible, p. 183)

8 He therefore that^a despiseth, (rejects, sets aside, violates)^b despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his^c holy Spirit.

(Brotherly love)

9 But as touching^a brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are^b taught of God to^c love one another.

10 And indeed ye do it toward all the brethren which are in all Macedonia: but we beseech you, brethren, that ye increase more and more;

11 And that ye^a study (strive, endeavor earnestly) to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to^b work with your own^c hands, as we commanded you;

12 That ye may walk^a honestly toward them that are without, and *that* ye may have lack of nothing.

(Christ's Second Coming)

13 But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye^a sorrow not, even as others which have no^b hope.

14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which^a sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. (The living are caught up to meet their returning Lord, and with him they shall return to live on this earth, which will then be changed and receive its paradisiacal glory. When the living arrive at the age of a tree, 100 years, they shall be changed from mortality to immortality in the twinkling of an eye and shall then reign as kings and priests in exalted glory. (D&C 101:23-31) Also at our Lord's return, the righteous dead shall come forth from their graves with celestial bodies to meet their God. They, then, as kings and priests shall live and reign with Christ on earth in resurrected glory for a thousand years. Thus the saints, whether they sleep in the Lord or live in the flesh until he comes, shall inherit glory and honor and salvation at his Coming. The formal, shall we even say ritualistic judgment,

when all stand before his bar, shall not take place until after the millennium, after all have come forth from their graves. DNTC, 3:52)

15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, ^athat ~~we which~~ (they who are) are alive *and remain unto* (at) the coming of the Lord shall not ^cprevent (precede, make progress over) them ~~which~~ (who remain unto the coming of the Lord, who) are asleep.

16 For the Lord himself shall ^adescend from heaven with ^ba shout (a cry of command, a cheer), with the voice of the ^carchangel, and with the ^dtrump of God: and the dead in Christ shall ^erise first: (The righteous dead shall come forth in the resurrection of the just; wicked men shall rise second, in the resurrection of the unjust. The catching up of the living saints shall take place at the same time the righteous dead are resurrected. DNTC, 3:52)

17 ^aThen ~~we which~~ (they who) are alive *and remain* shall be ^bcaught up together with them in (to) the clouds (with them who remain), to meet the ^cLord in the ^dair: and so shall we ^eever be (ever) with the ^fLord.

18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

CHAPTER 5

Saints shall know the season of the Second Coming of Christ—Live as becometh saints—Rejoice evermore—Despise not prophesyings.

1 BUT of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you.

2 For yourselves know perfectly that the ^aday of the Lord so cometh as a ^bthief in the night.

3 For when they shall say, Peace and ^asafety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not ^bescape.

4 But ye, brethren, are not in ^adarkness, that that ^bday should overtake you as a thief. (He shall come as a thief in the night, unexpectedly and without warning, to the world, to those who are in spiritual darkness, to those who are not enlightened by the power of the Spirit. But his coming shall not overtake the saints as a thief, for they know and understand the signs of the times. DNTC, 3:54)

5 Ye are all the ^achildren (sons) of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.

6 Therefore let us not ^asleep, as *do* others; but let us ^bwatch and be ^csober. (sober, vigilant, circumspect)

7 For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night.

(Various Christian duties)

8 But let us, who are of the day, be ^asober, putting on the ^bbreastplate of ^cfaith and love; and for an helmet, the ^dhope of salvation.

9 For God hath not appointed us to ^awrath, but to obtain ^bsalvation by our Lord Jesus Christ,

10 Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should ^alive together with him.

11 Wherefore ^acomfort (exhort, console, encourage) yourselves together, and ^bedify one another, even as also ye do.

12 And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which ^alabour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you;

13 And to ^aesteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. *And* be at ^bpeace among yourselves.

(Members of the Church are to highly esteem the ecclesiastical leaders who preside over them.

Criticism, faultfinding, backbiting, and gossip should be done away with, and an attitude of helpfulness, honest praise, kindness, and forbearance should prevail. This same respect and honor is to be given to all who labor to build up the kingdom. How is such honor for those who bear the priesthood to be obtained? For the men in the Church the following advice is of great value: "If you will honor the Holy Priesthood in yourself first, you will honor it in those who preside over you and in those who administer

in the various callings throughout the Church.” Joseph F. Smith, *A Journey to the South*, p. 106)

14 Now we exhort you, brethren, ^awarn them that are ^bunruly, ^ccomfort (encourage, console) the ^dfeeble-minded, (faint-hearted, despondent) ^esupport (care for) the ^fweak, (infirm, doubting, timid) be patient toward all *men*.

15 See that none ^arender ^bevil for evil unto any ^c*man*; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all *men*.

16 ^aRejoice evermore.

17 ^aPray without ceasing.

18 In every thing give ^athanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

19 ^aQuench (extinguish, hinder, suppress) not the ^bSpirit.

20 Despise not prophesyings.

21 ^aProve all things (examine, put to the test); hold fast that which is good.

22 ^aAbstain from all ^bappearance (kinds) of ^cevil.

(Blessing)

23 And the very God of peace ^asanctify you wholly; and *I pray God* your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

24 Faithful *is* he that calleth you, who also will do *it*.

(Salutation)

25 Brethren, pray for us.

26 Greet all the brethren with an holy ^akiss. (salutation)

27 I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read unto all the holy brethren.

28 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you. Amen.

THE SECOND EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE THESSALONIANS CHAPTER 1

At his Second Coming the Lord Jesus will take vengeance upon the ungodly.

(Salutation)

1 PAUL, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, (the servants of God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ), ^aunto the ^bchurch of the Thessalonians ~~in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:~~

2 Grace unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

(Thanksgiving)

3 We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth;

4 So that we ourselves glory in you in the ^achurches of God for your ^bpatience (endurance) and faith in all your ^cpersecutions and tribulations that ye endure:

(Judgment)

5 *Which is* a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also ^asuffer:

6 Seeing *it is* a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you;

7 And to you who are troubled ^arest with us, when the ^bLord Jesus shall be ^crevealed from heaven with

his mighty^d angels,

8 In flaming^a fire taking^b vengeance on them that know not God, and that^c obey not the^d gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:

9 Who shall be^a punished with^b everlasting^c destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his (everlasting) power;

10 When he shall come to be^a glorified in his^b saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day.

11 Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you^a worthy of *this* calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of *his* goodness, and the work of faith with power:

12 That the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the^a grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER 2

Apostasy is to precede the Second Coming—Gospel prepares men for eternal glory.

(Second Coming - Apostasy)

1 NOW we beseech you, brethren,^a by (concerning) the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and *by* our gathering together unto him,

2 That ye be not soon shaken in mind,^a or be troubled (by letter, except ye receive it from us), neither by spirit, nor by word, ~~nor by^b letter as from us,~~ as that the^c day of Christ is at hand.

3 Let no man deceive you by any means:^a for ~~that day shall not come, except there (shall) come a~~ ^bfalling away first (apostasy of the early Christian church), and that^c man of^d sin (Satan) be revealed, (Paul's promise that the man of sin must be revealed before our Lord could return from the millennial era has been abundantly fulfilled. At a conference of the Church held June 3, 1831, the man of sin was revealed in that some of the brethren were overcome by devils whom the Prophet rebuked and cast out HC, 1:175, DNTC, 3:63) the son of perdition (Satan); (The Greek word Paul uses is *apostasias*, the word from which we derive the words apostasy, apostatize, and apostate. The literal meaning of the word is to revolt, but in secular Greek usage it meant political revolt or the changing of governmental forms. The passage here is a reference to the apostasy that was to occur before the Lord returns to the earth to rule and reign in majesty and power. New Testament Study Guide, p. 276. Between the first and second personal ministries of the Lord Jesus on planet earth, the gospel was to be lost, darkness was to cover the earth, and Satan was to have control and dominion over the hearts and minds of men. DNTC, 3:63) (Sons of Perdition)

4 Who^a opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.

5 Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?

6 And now ye know^a what withholdeth (the one who possesses, holds in firm grasp, restrains.) that he might be^b revealed (disclosed, discovered, manifested) in his time.

7^a For the^b mystery of^c iniquity (lawlessness) doth already work (, and he it is who now worketh, and Christ suffereth him to work): ~~only^d he who now letteth will let,~~ (he who now possesses, holds in firm grasp, restrains.) until (the time is fulfilled that) he (shall) be taken out of the way. (This has reference to Satan, who will be taken out of the way, or bound, after the Lord's return.)

8 And then shall that^a Wicked (lawless one) be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his^b coming:

9 *Even him,* (Yea, the Lord, even Jesus) whose coming is (not until) after (there cometh a falling away,

by) the working of Satan with all ^apower and ^bsigns and lying wonders,
10 And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.
11 And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:
12 That they all might be ^adamned (brought to account, trial) who ^bbelieved not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

(Thanksgiving)

13 But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning ^achosen you to salvation through ^bsanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: (Members of the Church were foreordained to be saved in the celestial kingdom; they were chosen in the pre-existence to gain eternal life. DNTC, 3:64)
14 Whereunto he called you by our ^agospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

(Blessing)

15 Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.
16 Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath ^aloved us, and hath given us everlasting ^bconsolation and good hope through ^cgrace,
17 Comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work.

CHAPTER 3

Pray for the triumph of the gospel cause—Paul preaches the gospel of work—Be not weary in well doing.

(Request for Prayer)

1 FINALLY, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord ^amay have *free* course, (may progress freely, rapidly) and be glorified, even as *it is* with you:
2 And that we may be delivered from ^aunreasonable (unsuitable, absurd, improper) and wicked men: for all *men* have not faith.
3 But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep *you* from ^aevil. (the evil one, the devil)
4 And we have ^aconfidence in the Lord touching you, that ye both do and will do the things which we command you.
5 And the Lord ^adirect your hearts into the ^blove of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ.

(Instruction concerning idlers)

6 Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye ^awithdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh ^bdisorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us. (Enemies from within, traitors to the Cause, cultists who pervert the doctrines and practices which lead to salvation, often draw others away with them, and added souls lose their anticipated inheritance in the heavenly kingdom. When cultists and enemies become fixed in their opposition to the Church, and when they seek to convert others to their diverse positions, the course of wisdom is to avoid them, as Paul here directs, and to leave them in the Lord's hands. DNTC, 3:66)
7 For yourselves know how ye ought to ^afollow us (imitate): for we ^bbehaved not ourselves disorderly among you;
8 Neither did we eat any man's bread ^afor nought (undeservedly, gratuitously); but wrought with ^blabour and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you:

9 Not because we have not ^apower, (authority) but to make ourselves an ^bensample unto you to follow us.

10 For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not ^awork, neither should he eat.

11 For we hear that there are some which walk among you ^adisorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies.

12 Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own ^abread.

13 But ye, brethren, be not ^aweary in well doing.

14 And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed.

15 Yet count *him* not as an ^aenemy, but ^badmonish *him* as a ^cbrother.

(Blessing)

16 Now the Lord of peace himself give you peace always by all means. The Lord *be* with you all.

(Salutation)

17 The salutation of Paul with mine own ^ahand, which is the token in every epistle: so I write.

18 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you all. Amen.

Additional Readings

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE
CORINTHIANS
CHAPTER 2

The gospel is preached by the power of the Spirit—The Spirit reveals all things to the saints—The unregenerated ‘natural man’ cannot receive the things of the Spirit of God.

1 AND I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the ^atestimony of God.

2 For I determined not to know any thing among you, ^asave (except) Jesus Christ, and him ^bcrucified.

3 And I was with you in ^aweakness, and in fear, and in much trembling.

4 And my ^aspeech and my preaching *was* not with ^benticing words (persuasive) of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration of the ^cSpirit and of ^dpower:

5 That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the ^apower of God.

6 Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are ^aperfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought:

7 But we speak the ^awisdom of God in a ^bmystery, *even* the hidden ^cwisdom, which God ^dordained (foreordained) before the world unto our glory:

8 Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known *it*, they would not have ^acrucified the Lord of glory.

9 But as it is written, ^aEye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath ^bprepared for them that love him.

10 But God hath ^arevealed *them* unto us by his ^bSpirit: for the ^cSpirit ^dsearcheth all things (explores, investigates), yea, the deep things of God.

11 For what man ^aknoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God ^bknoweth no man, ^cbut the ^dSpirit of God.

12 Now we have received, not the ^aspirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might

know the things that are freely given to us of God.

13 Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's ^awisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost ^bteacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. (We shall finally have to come to the same conclusion that Paul did, that "no man knows the things of God but by the Spirit of God." We never can comprehend the things of God and of heaven but by revelation. We may spiritualize and express opinions to all eternity, but that is no authority. Joseph Smith's Commentary on the Bible, p. 159)

BIBLE DICTIONARY PAULINE EPISTLES

Paul's 14 epistles found in our present N.T. were written to members of the Church who already had some knowledge of the gospel. They are not evangelistic; rather, they are regulatory in nature. The arrangement is neither chronological, geographical, nor alphabetical, but by length, in descending order from the longest (Romans) to the shortest (Philemon). This is the case except with the epistle to the Hebrews, which was placed last because some have questioned whether or not it was written by Paul. The dating and chronological grouping of the epistles as presented below is approximate, but seems consistent with the known facts.

An advantage in studying the epistles in chronological order is that the reader sees the differences in the types of problems the Church encountered as the years passed and circumstances changed. Early membership was mostly Jewish, and problems included questions about the law of Moses. Later, when the gentile membership had increased, problems involved items of Greek philosophy. Early persecution was from the Jews and the Judaizers. Later persecution came from the Roman government. These things are visible in the epistles not by sharp distinction, but by the gradual shift of emphasis.

Paul's epistles may be divided into four groups

1. 1 and 2 Thes. A.D. 50, 51
2. 1 and 2 Cor., Gal., Rom. A.D. 55, 57
3. Philip., Col., Eph., Philem., Heb. A.D. 60, 62
4. Titus, 1 and 2 Tim. A.D. 64, 65

THE FIRST GROUP

1 and 2 Thessalonians

Epistles to the Thessalonians were written from Corinth during Paul's first visit to Europe. His work in Thessalonica is described in Acts 17. It was his wish to return, but he was unable to do so (1 Thes. 2: 18); he therefore sent Timothy to cheer the converts and bring him word how they fared. The first epistle is the outcome of his thankfulness on Timothy's return.

Analysis of 1 Thessalonians

1. Personal

- a. Salutation and thanksgiving (1 Thes. 1: 1-10).
- b. Reminder of his work among them, and fresh thanksgiving (1 Thes. 2: 1-16).
- c. His anxiety on their behalf and his reason for sending Timothy (1 Thes. 2: 17 - 3: 10).
- d. A prayer for them (1 Thes. 3: 11-13).

2. Instruction

- a. Exhortation about spiritual growth, chastity, love, and diligence (1 Thes. 4: 1-12).

b. Doctrine of the second advent, for the consolation of the bereaved (1 Thes. 4: 13-18), and for the warning and edification of survivors (1 Thes. 5: 1-11).

c. Exhortation to laity, clergy, and the whole church (1 Thes. 5: 12-28).

In the short interval between the two epistles the Church suffered from persecution (2 Thes. 1: 4); the prospect of an immediate return of the Lord fostered an unhealthy excitement (2 Thes. 2: 2), and seemed to countenance improvident idleness (2 Thes. 3: 6), while Paul's own teaching had been misunderstood (2 Thes. 3: 17, cf. 2 Thes. 2: 2).

Analysis of 2 Thessalonians

1. Salutation and thanksgiving (2 Thes. 1: 1-10).

2. A prayer (2 Thes. 1: 11-12).

3. Teaching about the second advent; the Lord not to come immediately (2 Thes. 2: 1-12).

4. Thanksgiving, an appeal to stand firm, and a prayer (2 Thes. 2: 13-17).

5. Prayer for himself and his converts (2 Thes. 3: 1-5).

6. Duty of subordination and of work (2 Thes. 3: 6-16).

7. Conclusion (2 Thes. 3: 17-18).

BIBLE MAPS THE MISSIONARY JOURNEYS OF THE APOSTLE PAUL



1. **Gaza** Philip preached of Christ and baptized an Ethiopian eunuch on his way to Gaza (Acts 8:26-39).
2. **Jerusalem** See map 12 for events in Jerusalem.
3. **Joppa** Peter received a vision that God grants the gift of repentance to the Gentiles (Acts 10; 11:5-18). Peter raised Tabitha from the dead (Acts 9:36-42).
4. **Samaria** Philip ministered in Samaria (Acts 8:5-13), and Peter and John later taught here (Acts 8:14-25). After they conferred the gift of the Holy Ghost, Simon the sorcerer sought to buy this gift from them (Acts 8:9-24).
5. **Caesarea** Here, after an angel ministered to a centurion named Cornelius, Peter allowed him to be baptized (Acts 10). Here Paul made his defense before Agrippa (Acts 25-26; see also JS-H 1:24-25).
6. **Damascus** Jesus appeared to Saul (Acts 9:1-7). After Ananias restored Saul's sight, Saul was baptized and began his ministry (Acts 9:10-27).
7. **Antioch (in Syria)** Here disciples were first called Christians (Acts 11:26). Agabus prophesied famine (Acts 11:27-28). Great dissension arose at Antioch concerning circumcision (Acts 14:26-28; 15:1-9). In

Antioch Paul began his second mission with Silas, Barnabas, and Judas Barnabas (Acts 15:22, 30, 35).

8. Tarsus Paul's hometown; Paul was sent here by the Brethren to protect his life (Acts 9:29-30).

9. Cyprus After being persecuted, some Saints fled to this island (Acts 11:19). Paul traveled through Cyprus on his first missionary journey (Acts 13:4-5), as did Barnabas and Mark later (Acts 15:39).

10. Paphos Paul cursed a sorcerer here (Acts 13:6-11).

11. Derbe Paul and Barnabas preached the gospel in this city (Acts 14:6-7, 20-21).

12. Lystra When Paul healed a cripple, he and Barnabas were hailed as gods. Paul was stoned and presumed dead but revived and continued preaching (Acts 14:6-21). Home of Timothy (Acts 16:1-3).

13. Iconium On their first mission, Paul and Barnabas preached here and were threatened with stoning (Acts 13:51-14:7).

14. Laodicea and Colosse Laodicea is one of the branches of the Church that Paul visited and received letters from (Col. 4:16). It is also one of the seven cities listed in the book of Revelation (the others are Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, and Philadelphia; see Rev. 1:11). Colosse lies 11 miles to the southeast of Laodicea. Paul wrote to the Saints who lived here.

15. Antioch (in Pisidia) On their first mission, Paul and Barnabas taught the Jews that Christ came of the seed of David. Paul offered the gospel to Israel, then to the Gentiles. Paul and Barnabas were persecuted and expelled (Acts 13:14-50).

16. Miletus While here on his third mission, Paul warned the elders of the Church that "grievous wolves" would enter the flock (Acts 20:29-31).

17. Patmos John was a prisoner on this island when he received the visions now contained in the book of Revelation (Rev. 1:9).

18. Ephesus Apollos preached here with power (Acts 18:24-28). Paul, on his third mission, taught in Ephesus for two years, converting many people (Acts 19:10, 18). Here he conferred the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands (Acts 19:1-7) and performed many miracles, including casting out evil spirits (Acts 19:8-21). Here worshipers of Diana raised a tumult against Paul (Acts 19:22-41). Part of the book of Revelation was addressed to the Church at Ephesus (Rev. 1:11).

19. Troas While Paul was here on his second missionary journey, he saw a vision of a man in Macedonia asking for help (Acts 16:9-12). While here on his third mission, Paul raised Eutychus from the dead (Acts 20:6-12).

20. Philippi Paul, Silas, and Timothy converted a woman named Lydia, cast out an evil spirit, and were beaten (Acts 16:11-23). They received divine help to escape prison (Acts 16:23-26).

- 21. Athens** Paul, while on his second mission to Athens, preached at Mars' Hill (Areopagus) about the "unknown god" (Acts 17:22-34).
- 22. Corinth** Paul went to Corinth on his second mission, where he stayed with Aquila and Priscilla. He preached here and baptized many people (Acts 18:1-18). From Corinth, Paul wrote his epistle to the Romans.
- 23. Thessalonica** Paul preached here during his second missionary journey. His missionary group departed for Berea after the Jews threatened their safety (Acts 17:1-10).
- 24. Berea** Paul, Silas, and Timothy found noble souls to teach during Paul's second missionary journey. The Jews from Thessalonica followed and persecuted them (Acts 17:10-13).
- 25. Macedonia** Paul taught here on his second and third journeys (Acts 16:9-40; 19:21). Paul praised the generosity of the Macedonian Saints, who gave to him and to the poor Saints at Jerusalem (Rom. 15:26; 2 Cor. 8:1-5; 11:9).
- 26. Melita** Paul was shipwrecked on this island on his way to Rome (Acts 26:32; 27:1, 41-44). He was unharmed by a snakebite and healed many who were sick on Melita (Acts 28:1-15).
- 27. Rome** Paul preached here for two years under house arrest (Acts 28:16-31). He also wrote epistles, or letters, to the Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians and to Timothy and Philemon while imprisoned in Rome. Peter wrote his first epistle from "Babylon," which was probably Rome soon after Nero's persecutions of the Christians in A.D. 64. It is generally believed that Peter and Paul were martyred here.